

# MOVING FROM THE SLUMS

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Seventh Report  
of the Housing Management Sub-Committee  
of the  
Central Housing Advisory Committee

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## INTRODUCTION

1. We were appointed by the Central Housing Advisory Committee in January, 1956, "to examine problems of housing management arising from the rehousing of families from unfit houses, and to make recommendations".

2. Since these terms of reference were related especially to slum clearance, we felt it would be valuable to have as a member of our Committee a Medical Officer of Health who is actively connected with this work. We therefore invited Dr. J. F. Galloway, the Medical Officer of Health of Wolverhampton County Borough, to join us as a co-opted member of the Committee.

3. We invited evidence from the local authority associations and from a representative selection of individual local authorities. In addition we sought the view of a number of organizations interested in matters connected with housing management and slum clearance, and we received oral evidence from individuals with personal experience of some of the problems which we have had under review. Through the kindness of one of our members, Alderman A. F. Bradbeer, arrangements were made for us to visit Birmingham in order to see the work being carried out by the City Council in the redevelopment of the central areas and we found this visit both interesting and stimulating.

4. To all those who have helped us by submitting papers or by discussing the subject with us we express our grateful thanks. We have been much indebted to their help in preparing this report. A list of those who gave written and oral evidence will be found in Appendix I.

## THE SCOPE OF THE REPORT

5. We have interpreted our terms of reference as applying to those aspects of slum clearance which are concerned with the families occupying either individual unfit houses or houses in clearance areas. Our report will not deal with questions connected with the machinery of slum clearance, and we are only incidentally concerned with the new houses or flats which will be provided to replace those to be demolished. Our primary interest is in the families affected by slum clearance proposals, and in the action which can be taken to ensure that the move from the existing home to a new one is made as smoothly as possible.

6. Previous reports of this Sub-Committee have dealt with some matters to which we shall have occasion to refer. Those most relevant to our present inquiry are "Transfers, Exchanges and Rents" (1953) and "Unsatisfactory Tenants" (1955). We do not propose to deal in detail with matters fully discussed in these two reports but will make reference to the appropriate sections.

## THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

7. The resumption of slum clearance on a large scale by local authorities after an interval of seventeen years is a matter for general satisfaction. To us all it is a long awaited opportunity for attacking once more the wretched conditions which still restrict and darken too many lives. Our object now must be eradication. The mere lapse of seventeen years carries with it a certain danger that the conditions of families living in slum areas are not fully appreciated. When the slum clearance programme began about 1925 and reached its full force with the

Housing Act of 1930, many people realised with pained surprise the fact that there were still, in the overwhelming majority of our towns and villages, slums that would have been regarded as a disgrace in the middle of the nineteenth century. A generation has now passed, and in spite of great efforts on the part of government and local authorities there remains a mass of ugly and venomous slums. It is true that many deserving families on the general waiting list are living under overcrowded conditions and have been waiting in desperation for rehousing, but the houses they occupy may not necessarily form part of the hard core of the slum. In the mass type of construction dating back a hundred years or more there is neither order nor decency. Indoor sanitation and water do not exist, but worse still is the stagnant air, the mixing up of dwellings with other buildings, the shared water closets in tiny airless yards and the unspeakable decay of the houses themselves. No family can be expected to live happily or bring up children under such conditions. There is generally overcrowding, but what makes the slum is the dilapidation and ruin in these dwellings which frustrate any attempt at home-making.

8. Most of the families who have long endured the discomforts of the slums look forward eagerly to the offer of a better home and welcome the prospect of the move, yet we must draw a sharp distinction between rehousing for slum clearance and providing houses for families on the ordinary waiting list. The latter seek a new home voluntarily but the occupants of slums will be required to move whether they wish to or not. Some are reluctant to take this step, for it may mean longer journeys to work or school, and being separated from friends and relatives. The higher rent which they must expect is a further drawback. Owner-occupiers indeed may well be satisfied with homes on which they have spent money, and quite likely they have opposed slum clearance proposals. Sometimes their houses are not even unfit but merely surrounded by dilapidated property. In spite of compensation, owner-occupiers may well have a feeling of resentment which the local authority will have to use every effort to overcome.

9. It is just this element of compulsion in the move that justifies special consideration of the problems which confront many of the families affected by slum clearance. If these difficulties can only be recognised and solved at the right moment, the job of uprooting numbers of families and then resettling them, perhaps at a distance from their previous homes, will be made easier and pleasanter for all. *In its essence this is a matter of public relations; by that we mean giving the people who are involved the fullest information about what is to be done, why it is to be done, and when it is to be done.*

10. In some ways slum clearance today presents difficulties of a different kind from those of the first campaign a generation ago. Poverty was more widespread then than now, and economic reasons alone made people less happy in looking forward to the prospect of a new house and less confident in their ability to meet the demands of the move. Living standards have risen since then, and it is clear from the evidence submitted to us that there is no great difference in level between those now living in clearance areas and those on the general waiting list. No doubt this improvement has given families greater self-reliance so that they can usually face the transition from slum to new house without anxiety and without the need for material assistance. For example, most families have a reasonable amount of furniture and can add to this from their own resources. We believe that the majority are eager to enjoy the higher standards of the new estates; this was put to us in evidence by the Society of Housing Managers, who said that many families from the slums "welcome the modern conveniences, adjust their way of living, rearrange their budget, and settle down happily in their new surroundings".

11. All the same, a number of families find the move irksome even if it is not actually unwelcome. Their troubles are greater when the clearance programme is

on a big scale, and especially when their new house or flat has to be provided on an estate some distance away from the old one. When the size of the local authority and the availability of sites make it possible to rehouse people nearby, the ties with familiar surroundings are not broken and so the move is made more acceptable. There are without doubt individual cases in which troubles arise—especially with owner-occupiers or the elderly—but in general, rehousing flows smoothly unless the slum clearance programme is on a large scale. Most big towns and groups of towns have developed many of the sites near their centres during post-war years; but until they can rebuild some of the clearance areas they will have to go on making use of sites several miles away from the districts to be cleared. In London, for example, these distances may be as great as twenty-five miles. In any case redevelopment at the centre means reduced density and some outward migration is inevitable. In the early stages families will have to move away before rebuilding can be undertaken.

12. Most families will have to face some problems, domestic, social, or economic, in being transferred to a new district. In addition to increased rent and other expenses connected with a larger house they will probably have to pay higher fares to their work; the children may have to go to a new school, and the older ones, at any rate, may have to travel back to their present school; grandparents may be left behind and arrangements must be made for their care; ties of many kinds with churches, clubs, shops, health services, may all be broken and the new estate may be slow in replacing many of these familiar and friendly associations. Even without these new troubles some people who have spent their lives in the gay hubbub of the city may hesitate at the prospect of adjusting themselves to the loneliness of the more rural estates. Difficulties of this kind cast deeper shadows with old people who lack the physical and mental resilience of younger families; in their eyes the benefits of a better house seldom outweigh the distress of severing lifelong ties. Other groups too, may feel only a sense of hardship as a result of slum clearance; among these are shopkeepers and the owners of small businesses who feel that they stand to lose more by displacement than ordinary tenants.

13. There is one further group whose rehousing creates a special problem for local authorities—the families whose standards of living are far below those of their neighbours. Most of them have no wish to move to a new house, not much furniture to take to it, and little means to pay the rent. Today families of this kind are in a small minority, but their rehousing is a major embarrassment when we try to improve their conditions without imposing an unfair burden on their new neighbours.

14. One thing is clear, that in carrying out their slum clearance proposals local authorities will be called on to think out a large number of personal problems that affect the offer of a house: the type of accommodation, its location, the rent to be charged, its position in relation to old friends and new neighbours. *Not the least important part of the long process of slum clearance is a careful study of the needs of individual families and the search for ways of meeting them.*

## CONTACTS WITH THE FAMILIES TO BE REHOUSED

15. As soon as an area has been declared for clearance, and often before then, those living in it are anxious to know how soon they will have to move and where they will have to go. This uncertainty about the future creates obvious difficulties for the families and causes anxieties which should be set at rest as

soon as possible. The first stage in slum clearance is the inspection by the medical officer of health, or his staff, before the houses are represented as unfit. Those who carry out this work may not know the exact timing of the actual clearance or the proposals for rehousing those who are displaced. It is, of course, difficult for local authorities to be precise at an early stage but *we recommend that every effort should be made to give full and accurate information as early as possible.* It is a highly complex matter to arrange the phases of a programme so as to ensure that it will work smoothly and without interruption, and it calls for the fullest co-operation between central and local government departments as well as between the various departments within the local authority. *One point of great importance is that the housing manager should be brought into consultation as soon as the question of new housing arises.* He is the person in the best position to advise upon the numbers of different types of dwelling needed for re-housing the families to be displaced; he will get to know these families, as he already knows the preferences of the council's existing tenants, and so his opinion should be of great value on many matters affecting the layout and design of the new dwellings. He himself will need to know well in advance the proposed timing of the various stages and to be given due notice of any delays or other changes in the time-table. These are the very things that would seriously affect the families to be moved.

16. Local authorities under the provisions of Section 1 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, have had to assess their slum clearance programme and estimate the time required to complete it. In addition they have had to make a close estimate of the clearance programme for the years 1955-60. All local authorities should therefore have reliable information to give to enquirers, for example, whether a particular house is included in the five-year programme and whether it is likely to be dealt with early or late in that period. We were impressed by the admirable information on the phasing of the programme which was being given to the families living in redevelopment areas in Birmingham; they are told the year in which they may expect to move, some years in advance.

17. To allay the natural anxiety of tenants about the future it is best to arrange a personal visit from a member of the housing department as soon as possible after the declaration. This visit serves three important purposes; to establish the number of persons living in each house; to note any special needs of the family; and to answer the more urgent questions about time and place. (Where such visits take place before the confirmation of an order care should be taken not to give the impression that the outcome is a foregone conclusion.)

18. The question of how many persons are to be rehoused from an area was referred to more than once in the evidence we received. As many authorities are likely to curtail their building for general housing needs in favour of slum clearance this has led to a risk that people will try to move into clearance areas so as to get a new house more quickly. Because a change of tenancy or sub-tenancy may lead to difficulties in rehousing it is therefore necessary to verify at the earliest possible moment who is living in the area, and also to warn householders that if they later take in other lodgers or sub-tenants these persons have not an automatic right to be rehoused.

19. Advice on how to interpret the term "families" in considering who shall be provided with a new house, was given to local authorities in Circular 33/56 which states that "The number of new dwellings which will qualify for the slum clearance subsidy will be reckoned by the number of families displaced and subsequently rehoused by the local authority. In interpreting the term "families" the Minister thinks it reasonable to include owner-occupiers, tenants and sub-tenants and married children, but not individual lodgers—as separate families". Lodgers are excluded no doubt on the grounds that persons living in furnished premises can find similar accommodation elsewhere. We think, however, that

where anyone has lived for many years with a particular family and is regarded almost as one of its members he should be allowed to move with it; and the family should be allowed a house big enough to permit of this.

20. The better the members of the housing department know the families to be moved, the more likely are they to consider and meet their requirements. This knowledge can be acquired only in the course of a number of visits and if the local authority have acquired the properties in advance of actual rehousing they can be managed by the housing department, and personal contact with the occupants thus established. In other cases different means must be used for making contact with the families through a series of visits to the homes. The purpose of these contacts is to give the tenants real confidence in the local authority's intentions and an understanding of the possible alternatives that lie before them. Through them the housing manager will get to know his prospective tenants, their varying needs and their varying capacities. He will be able to advise them personally on many things connected with the move and on how best to prepare for what may be a critical change in their way of life.

21. What is the heart of the matter? The value of these contacts depends almost wholly on the members of the housing department who make them. *We cannot over-estimate the importance of using humane, experienced, and well-qualified staff for these home visits and for the interviews given in the office.* It is this process of transplanting families that requires so much skill and judgment—skill in assessing needs, in choosing the right kind of alternative accommodation and in placing families on the estates; and sound judgment in giving personal help and advice both before and after the move.

## ALLOCATION OF ACCOMMODATION

22. The needs of the families to be rehoused vary a great deal both in the type of dwelling and in its location. No doubt what most families want is a new house at a low rent near their present home. In point of fact, the new dwellings to replace the old are more likely to be flats in the large towns, or if houses they will probably be built on the outskirts of a town and well away from the clearance areas. *The main point is, that this should be made clear from the start so as not to raise false hopes of different accommodation;* and we believe that in the interests of the tenants the housing manager should be given responsibility to make the best arrangements he can. It may be necessary to look for alternatives for some families, and a local authority should have a varied reserve of accommodation. This will make the task of supplying people's needs much easier. Pre-war estates often provide lower-rented and more simply equipped houses, and vacancies in these can sometimes be created by transferring tenants who are willing to move to a more modern dwelling. Another source of supply lies in privately-owned houses, where the tenants are anxious to move to the council's estates. With the goodwill and co-operation of the landlords, exchanges of this kind can be arranged and so help to rehouse families in the districts of their choice.

23. The subject of transfers and exchanges was fully dealt with in a previous report\* and we hope its recommendations will be useful in this connection. The help of the private landlord is invaluable, and families in the clearance areas should be encouraged to seek out others who would like to make an exchange privately. An early amendment of the Rent Restrictions Acts might encourage exchanges of this kind by making the continued letting of a house more attractive and so lessen the desire of the landlord to sell his property. Some authorities

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\* Transfers, Exchanges and Rents: H.M.S.O. 1953



have raised the question as to whether, if a family from a clearance area were rehoused elsewhere than in a house provided for this purpose, subsidy would be available. We are glad to note that this point has been dealt with, in so far as other dwellings owned by the local authorities are concerned, in paragraph 6 of Appendix II of Circular 33/56, which runs as follows:

"In rehousing families the local authorities will not necessarily be expected to transfer them to the new dwellings which are provided in consequence of slum clearance. It may be desirable or convenient for the families to be rehoused in other dwellings owned by the local authorities. Such indirect rehousing methods will not affect the payment of the slum clearance subsidy for the new dwellings provided the local authority can satisfy the Minister that they are provided in consequence of slum clearance or redevelopment purposes".

We understand that the possibility of also making the slum clearance subsidy available where a family is rehoused through an exchange with the tenant of a privately owned house, has already been brought to the notice of the Ministry and is likely to be given sympathetic consideration. We believe it is a matter of real importance to local authorities that such exchanges should not be discouraged because the higher rate of subsidy is not available for the new dwelling. The fullest use of all forms of exchanges would have the advantage not only of helping the families who were moved, but of providing a certain mixture of families from other clearance areas on the estates.

24. Local authorities with very large clearance programmes may possibly defer demolition of some of the houses and, after minimum repairs, relet them. Local authorities who do not wish to use houses in actual clearance areas may find it worth while to buy houses nearby and adapt them for rehousing. The value of "intermediate accommodation", coming somewhere between the unfit house and the newly built one, was emphasised in a recent report\*. Houses like this are especially suitable for old people who do not wish to move from their familiar neighbourhood, or for families whose standards would have to be raised before they qualified for a new house. We deal more fully with these two points later in this report.

25. The allocation of a dwelling involves taking account of many matters:—its site, whether it is a flat or house, and if a flat which storey, the number of rooms, the housewife's preference for a particular means of cooking, or the tenant's interest in gardening and hobbies, and much more. It sometimes cuts into the question of ties with relatives and neighbours; where two or three families have long been relying on each other as neighbours, they may well look for each other's help even more in a fresh area and would eagerly welcome a joint move. *Our own feeling is that the strongest efforts should be made in these cases to move families with their neighbours.*

26. When elderly people who are dependent on near relatives for help, especially in sickness or in bad weather, have to be rehoused, the separation of families should be strenuously avoided. The evidence we have received makes a strong point of this. It urges that not only is the separation of the older and younger generations injurious to both but that the new estate will be impoverished by the absence of older people. If the older tenants are left behind, their presence becomes an increasing problem to the local authority. The provision on all new estates of a number of small dwellings for older people reconciles many of them to the move when it enables them to live near their sons and daughters. This also leaves more room near the centre for those who wish to remain.

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\* Unsatisfactory Tenants. H.M.S.O., 1955.

## REMOVAL TO A FRESH DISTRICT

27. As we have indicated, most of the troubles that confront tenants moving from a clearance area arise either from the distance of the new dwellings from the old or from the increased cost of living in them. Where tenants are alarmed at the prospect of the move, it is often because they do not know about the conditions in the new area. Families do not always realise the great advantages of the new house, perhaps because they have become inured to the inconvenience and disrepair of the old one. We feel strongly that people should be persuaded to visit the new estate, and the visits would be more helpful if the local authority arranged for a house or a flat to be on view. Many people will be facing life in a flat for the first time and their fears should be reduced when they see how convenient a modern flat can be as a home. All the same the move from a house to a flat does mean some adjustments which may not be easy to make. Some of these problems have been discussed more fully in the report on "Living in Flats"\*. Families with young children under school age suffer most, from the loss of the small garden or back-yard where the children could play, and from the need to keep the children quiet for fear of disturbing neighbours. These points are obvious enough, but we believe they are still not fully appreciated in terms of family unhappiness and that not enough attempt is made to meet them. *We are convinced that greater efforts should be made, especially in the redevelopment of central areas, to provide more houses for families with young children, leaving the flats to be occupied by childless people or those whose children are of school age or over.*

28. Too many blocks of flats are still being built without enough places where small children can play in safety. We recognise the dilemma, but some authorities have shown that it can be solved. *We take the view that playgrounds, better sited and better equipped, should form an essential part of the programme of all new housing and the redevelopment of congested areas.*

29. Quite apart from children, the move from a house to a flat with its loss of the back-yard or garden means for some people that they must give up hobbies long enjoyed, like gardening, carpentry or pigeon-keeping. It may also mean getting rid of pets regarded as part of the family. We do not think these losses should be taken lightly; where families are anxious about this, exchanges should be sought so that they can move to a house where they can continue their hobbies and keep their pets. (See paragraphs 108-110 of the report on "Living in Flats".) We know that some authorities do not impose an absolute embargo on keeping cats or dogs in flats but deal with cases as they come. *We hope that all authorities will be sympathetic, and at least encourage interests that do not interfere with the comfort of other tenants.* Alternative hobbies which might be encouraged are the keeping of budgerigars or tropical fish, and window gardening.

30. The prospect of going to a flat is not the only cause of reluctance to move; some families are genuinely worried about losing the familiar amenities of shops and local markets, cinemas and eating places, churches, clinics, clubs and pubs. In the past, unfortunately, even the most essential of these needs, the shops, have often not been ready on the new estates and the tenants have been much dissatisfied; for them it means inconvenience and extra expense where lack of shops entails a long walk or a bus journey; and this is all the more burdensome when young children have to be taken as well. At that very time families will be feeling the loss of the cheap market which they liked so much in the central areas, and this alone makes the advance provision of shops, or at the very least the shopping van, all the more essential.

31. We have emphasised the advance provision of shops but it is equally

\* Living in Flats. H.M.S.O., 1952.

important to have bus services to and from the new estate in good time. Children may have to travel to school, young mothers to welfare clinics, other members of the family to work, and if these journeys are made easy the process of settling down and accepting the new life will be well begun. We are aware that in some cases there may be an initial financial loss, but this should be accepted in the interests of the tenants. *At this early stage a telephone kiosk is a great help in preventing a sense of isolation, and we urge that this should be given an early priority.*

32. The continuity of some of the health and other services in the new areas must be carefully preserved. Women attending maternity and child welfare clinics may have to transfer to new ones and should be told where and when to go. If it is a big estate there is much to be said for having a clinic ready for the move. These clinics, as our evidence shows, serve a valuable subsidiary purpose in providing a meeting place for young mothers where they can make contacts with their new neighbours. This is one of the services, like shops and launderettes, which help people to settle down. What has been said here on the importance of providing essential services at the outset on new estates is, of course, equally applicable to estates provided to meet the general housing needs.

33. *The housing manager should be ready to give full information about the availability of these and other services on or near the new estate.* When the estates are large it is useful to put a map on a board at each of the main entrances showing where the shops, schools, clinics and other services are to be found.

## FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE MOVE

34. Most families now living in clearance areas are paying a rent a good deal lower than that of the new dwellings provided for them. Many of them no doubt realise that the higher rent is amply justified by the better accommodation offered, and their income may be quite enough to meet it by reorganization of their budget. We recognise that this adjustment of the weekly budget is not an easy task, but families in this position must just decide what part of their present spending can be forgone to enable them to pay the higher rent. It is a great help if these people can be given time to get used to the situation and to make plans to meet it, and some tenants will need advice to help them. It was pointed out to us in evidence that higher rents tend today to be accepted as unavoidable and this should make the adjustment easier when the tenants' means are sufficient. On the other hand it should not be overlooked that, in well-designed houses and flats, the occupants may find their costs in some directions actually reduced. For instance, a good solid fuel appliance, properly installed and intelligently used, can give more heat for the consumption of less fuel than an old-fashioned grate. If in addition it heats the water by a hack-boiler the families who were used to getting hot water only from a kettle on the gas cooker will find that they get more at much less cost.

35. Families whose incomes are really too low to meet the normal rent of a new house or flat may be helped in one of two ways: either the local authority can charge a reduced rent or they can try to find a lower-rented house for such a family elsewhere. The advantages to a local authority of operating a rent rebate or differential rent scheme are probably never more evident than in slum clearance. If the rent can be adjusted to fit the tenant's means, the local authority is free to allocate new accommodation solely in the best interests of the family's requirements. The whole process becomes easier, the search for alternative accommodation for this reason is avoided, and the family can enjoy to the full the great benefits which the slum clearance programme is designed to provide.

36. Where no rent rebate scheme has been introduced, the alternative is to seek cheaper houses elsewhere, either in pre-war dwellings or by exchanges with other applicants on the list. The difficulties in doing this may induce some authorities to fall back on acquiring or retaining houses, which need not be demolished immediately, in or near the area, whose occupants may be willing to move to new houses. This has the disadvantage that some families may have to move a second time when more houses have to come down, but it is a useful temporary expedient.

## PROVISION OF FURNITURE

37. Increased rent is by no means the only cause of higher expenditure. Many tenants on moving to a larger house need additional furniture, floor coverings and curtains; unless something has been done to get these things in advance they will probably have to buy them on a hire purchase basis, the weekly cost of which may be considerable. A recent survey of a new housing estate showed that the average outlay per family on new furniture was £111, and weekly payments of £3 to £5 are not unusual. The system of obtaining goods by hire purchase is so widely accepted, and its convenience so obvious to those who cannot readily save in advance enough to purchase outright, that people do not always realise the heavy burden of these weekly payments. Pressure from door-to-door salesmen may be great and not easily resisted by the housewife. We feel that if the signature of the husband as well as the wife were required on hire purchase agreements this would at least give time for second thoughts. We have received evidence that this is a legal requirement in New South Wales\* and that it is regarded as a valuable adjunct to the usual hire purchase provisions. *We suggest that the adoption of this procedure in this country would help to protect people from too hasty expenditure.*

38. Before the war a number of local authorities made arrangements for providing furniture for tenants under the limited powers contained in Section 72 of the Housing Act, 1936. This section has now been supplemented by Section 8 of the Housing Act, 1949, which gives local authorities power to sell furniture to tenants or to supply it under a hire purchase agreement. In the relatively prosperous conditions of today local authorities may be reluctant to reintroduce schemes for the provision of furniture; but where there are families with very little furniture and low incomes the move to a new house will be robbed of some of its value if rooms cannot be used because the tenants are unable to furnish them. It would be a great blessing if they could buy at least essential furniture, such as extra beds or bedding, or chairs, or linoleum, from a local authority for a small weekly payment which could be collected with the rent. If the authority bought direct from local furniture dealers there should be no objection on the ground that the council was trading competitively with local shops.

39. Help of this kind could be supplemented for the poorest families by arrangements for collecting and distributing secondhand furniture. In many areas there are people who want to get rid of furniture which is still sound; the difficulty lies in its collection and storage. If the local authority could arrange for storage, voluntary organizations might be ready to deal with collection and distribution. In this way families could make a start in their new homes with at least the minimum of essential furniture and without incurring a burden of weekly repayments quite beyond their means.

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\* Section 27, Hire-purchase Agreements Act, 1941. (New South Wales).

## INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO TENANTS

40. We have already referred to the importance of giving early and accurate information to people in a clearance area, about where and when they may be required to move. Once the location of the new house has been settled and the probable date of removal is known, it is advisable to give the family as much notice as possible, so that they have adequate time for arranging the move. As the time for moving draws nearer families will find that they have a great number of other questions. They will want to know in some detail about the kind of accommodation on the new estates, the types of heating appliances and other equipment and the arrangements for clothes washing or for storage. They will ask anxious questions about things like employment for women, schools, clinics, medical services, transport and shopping in the new location. There will be further queries about television acrias and the keeping of birds or animals; about the space for keeping a car, an invalid chair, a pram or a washing machine. On the other hand it may be necessary to stimulate some tenants to take an interest in questions of this kind, persuade them to face the real problems of moving, and make the necessary decisions in good time.

41. Where people are living in houses acquired by the local authority many of these questions will be put to the rent collectors, and it is obviously desirable that they should be able to answer as many of them as possible. In particular they should be familiar with the new dwellings and able to give simple answers about them. They could not be expected, however, to deal with all the questions put, so that many queries will have to be referred to other officers in the housing department. Not all houses will be taken over by the local authority so that in any case some of the people to be rehoused will have to call at an office for information. Probably the best plan would be for one or more members of the staff to be made responsible for dealing with all enquiries. This means that they must acquire a good deal of knowledge for this purpose and keep in touch with other local authority departments, with government departments such as the National Assistance Board, and with a large number of voluntary organizations. These information officers, as we may call them, should have detailed information about the services in the new area, and it would be useful if they could have an office open one evening a week or on Saturday mornings so that husbands and wives could call there together. Joint discussions of this kind will go far to avoid subsequent changes of mind.

42. In a memorandum submitted by the London Council of Social Service it was suggested to us that in large clearance areas it would be an advantage to have a housing information office on the site to be cleared, which would be open at certain hours in the week. We think this proposal has much to commend it where the clearance areas are at some distance from the offices of the housing departments. The setting up of an office would do much to convince the people in the area that the council was anxious to deal helpfully with their problems. The proposal of the London Council of Social Service was extended to cover giving advice of a more specialised kind than a housing department would normally provide; for instance, the readjustment of the family budget to meet the increased expenditure, or the purchase of furniture and fittings suitable for the new house or flat. It was suggested that this advice could be given either to tenants individually or by arranging talks and demonstrations to small groups. This early contact with families might give an opportunity for encouraging saving in advance to meet the additional expenses at the time of the move, and that would be a help in adjusting to higher expenditure later on. It is quite likely that many housing managers, as a result of making contact with families to be rehoused, will find that some of them need advice of a more technical kind than they have time or experience to give. This is especially true of family

expenditure, including the consumption of gas or electricity for new or additional appliances. Useful talks and demonstrations can sometimes be arranged by local Gas and Electricity Boards. We are aware of the work of the home advice groups which, under the aegis of the London Council of Social Service and the National Institute of Houseworkers, provide elementary instruction in household management to small groups of housewives. In a similar way, preferably in association with the housing enquiry office which we have mentioned, advice could be given to small groups in the use of new appliances, choice of furniture, the making of curtains, &c., and we believe this would help a good many families. Talks of this kind might well reach the woman to whom it would not occur to attend classes at evening institutes, and for her sake it would be best to bring the service as near the clearance area as possible.

43. Evidence of the widespread interest in classes on handicrafts and subjects relating to the home is contained in a recent report by the Ministry of Education on the work of evening institutes,\* which shows that twenty-five per cent of all the students are women attending classes in "women's subjects". No doubt there is much of interest in the existing classes for people about to set up a new home and they should be advised to attend them; but perhaps there is room in some places for additional classes on subjects like making or renovating furnishings, or simple carpentry. We suggest that local education authorities might be asked to consider further provision of this sort.

44. A number of local authorities have found it very useful to put on view a furnished house or flat. In this way prospective tenants can see what a dwelling is really like as a home, and what heating appliances and so on are provided; and it helps them to think out how it could best be furnished. It is, of course, desirable to avoid the display of expensive and unsuitable furniture, and it is an advantage for all items shown to be clearly priced. If the furnishing is simple it will show the advantage of having plenty of room space not cluttered up with bulky furniture. The selection of the furnishing is best left to a small group of experienced people who would avoid reproducing the displays already available in furniture shops.

45. The value of these demonstrations is greatly increased if they can include a display of the use which can be made of such furniture as the prospective tenant might already own. The effect of this is not only to show a less expensive type of furniture but to give a more homely impression. There is today a lively interest in furniture and decoration and such an exhibition may include useful hints on how to refurnish old-fashioned furniture, and how its use may be combined with furniture of more modern design. Examples of this are also likely to encourage interest in the local classes in home making, to which we have already referred. The Women's Voluntary Service have in the past provided admirable exhibitions of this kind and would, we understand, be prepared to do so again. In rural areas the Women's Institutes might also be willing to take part in such demonstrations.

## OLD PEOPLE

46. It seems to be the general experience of local authorities that the clearance areas contain a higher proportion of old people and single people than other districts. Some old folk will be quite ready to move to better and healthier surroundings, but many having lived for a long time in their present homes will hate to move, especially if it means leaving a familiar district with its friends and neighbours, its kindly and convenient shops and its strong links with the past.

\* Evening Institutes: Pamphlet No. 28, Ministry of Education, H.M.S.O., 1956.

This is partly due to the effort involved and the first task of the authority will thus be to provide alternative accommodation near the old area. It has been suggested to us that where it is possible to rehouse on the cleared site a preference might be given to old people. Where the new building can take place only at a distance, reluctance to move may be overcome if a new house can be offered near some friend or relative who is also moving out. Or it may be possible to meet the needs of old people by exchanges so that they can move into small houses vacated by larger families, or by acquiring and converting houses in adjoining areas.

47. Conversion of larger houses into single room lettings with shared sanitary facilities have been carried out by both local authorities and housing associations. These arrangements have the advantage of providing neighbourly help in the house, sometimes through a warden or "housemother". If suitable houses can be found near the clearance areas they may be preferred by old people to new dwellings at a greater distance. Improvement grants may be available for these conversions.

48. The perplexities of a move to a new house, no matter where it is, are clearly much greater for old people than for others. In addition to the dread of change which is usual in old age, some of them may simply feel that the whole process is beyond them. Going to see the new house, giving up furniture which is no longer suitable, buying more, taking up lino and taking down curtains—these are some of the physical difficulties even when the move is to a new home quite close at hand. With greater distances there are further worries—separation from relatives and friends on whom they depend for help, loss of social contacts, the transfer to another doctor's list and getting a new home help, finding another coal merchant or having the pension book transferred to a different post office. Where there is no one to help them old people must find these things quite overwhelming.

49. Much assistance to the elderly can be given by housing managers and their staffs. The preliminary task of discussing where they should move to, of letting them see the choice that there is and of overcoming initial objections will be theirs, but for help with the innumerable details of the move after the new home has been accepted the housing manager may well need the aid of outside organizations. The first step is to get into touch with any friend or social worker who is already known to the old person, and with the local Old People's Welfare Committee. We have heard of at least one of these committees which has recruited a team of helpers, whose work is very practical—lighting fires, hanging curtains, arranging furniture, and making beds. The Women's Voluntary Service, in their evidence, have also offered to give this kind of help and to augment old people's furniture with gifts. This latter would be especially valuable when an old person is moving from a single room to a bigger dwelling. *We recommend local authorities to seek the help of these and similar organizations in their area.*

50. In addition to assisting before and during the move it is important to make sure that services on which old people relied previously are still available in the new homes. The Old People's Welfare Committee or the Women's Voluntary Service may be able to arrange for continued visiting or to introduce them to another old people's club. If they have previously had a home help or "meals on wheels", arrangements should be made to continue these services if possible. Perhaps most urgent of all would be to introduce the old people to their immediate neighbours; a great deal of their future will depend on their friendliness. We are told that on some estates the tenants themselves have formed committees to welcome newcomers and help them to settle down. These services would be particularly valuable to the aged and we hope that housing managers will do all they can to encourage and work with such committees.

## UNSATISFACTORY FAMILIES

51. The evidence submitted to us indicates that local authorities do not expect to find in clearance areas an unduly high proportion of families with standards below the average. All the same it is likely that there will be more than in better districts, partly because of their natural tendency to drift into the cheapest houses, and partly because bad housing creates conditions in which the weaker families lose heart and sink. The report on "Unsatisfactory Tenants" dealt at length with the ways of helping such families and we therefore propose to do no more than indicate the action that might be taken in rehousing. We must first distinguish between families who may need a great deal of help over a long period if they are to re-establish themselves, and those who are just being temporarily cast down by the conditions with which they are struggling. The latter respond best to the offer of a new or at least a pre-war house, though they will need advice and possibly help in getting new furniture and in other ways. The move to a better house is a great chance for a fresh start for these families and we should make the most of it.

52. The families who are unable, or even unwilling, to attempt a better standard are a more serious problem, but here too the value of the opportunity should not be overlooked. It so often happens that efforts to help a problem family are frustrated from the start by the difficulty of removing them from hopelessly bad housing conditions. Here the vital element of better housing is forthcoming, although the actual choice of accommodation may be all important. Re-housing in a new house may not be the best thing for these families. As the Family Service units put it to us in a reference to families moved to a new estate—"They are fearful of their neighbours and of the standards of the new area, their own conditions and habits are, of course, thrown into high relief. Sometimes as a result they are criticised or ostracised by neighbours for things which would have passed unnoticed in their former area". For this and other reasons the use of older and less well-equipped property is desirable. The offer may be welcomed as an advance on previous accommodation or it may be resented as a slight. In either case it should be regarded by the local authority as a stage in the family's progress and used as an incentive to effort. A family of this kind should not be rehoused in a flat if it can possibly be avoided. They are better placed in an old house even if they have to be rehoused again within a few years. It is a mistake to rehouse too many problem families in one street. They generally have a bad effect upon each other and they will almost inevitably cause discomfort and resentment amongst their neighbours.

53. If, before rehousing, the rent has been collected from these families by the housing department, this is a good chance for observing their shortcomings and planning the best way to help them. They may be helped to get furniture and other necessary equipment, or encouraged to save for it if they can. When they get to their new homes it is best to see that they pay for gas and electricity through prepayment meters rather than by quarterly accounts. In some cases it may be necessary to seek the help of organizations such as the Family Service Units or other social workers with special knowledge of problem families. Continued help will have to be given as a rule long after the move. The Women's Voluntary Service in evidence to us pointed out the value of helping the mother in her own home through a "specially selected . . . working welfare worker . . . who has reared her own family on the same sort of income as that of the family she is helping and is ready to work and scrub with the mother". *We have no doubt that such a service, provided at the time when rehousing is giving the family a fresh start, would be of the greatest value in helping them to re-establish themselves in the community.*



## DISINFESTATION

54. The 1938 Report on the " Management of Municipal Housing Estates " (paragraph 29) recommended that all families removed from slum houses should have their effects disinfested as a routine measure. This was a common practice even prior to the report, principally as a means of eradicating bed bugs. Furniture was usually treated with hydrogen cyanide gas in the removal vans and bedding was often steam treated. Many scientific aspects of this matter were dealt with in the Medical Research Council's " Report of the Committee on Bed Bug Infestation (1935-1940) ", and we have been fortunate in having a memorandum on the subject of disinfestation from Dr. J. R. Busvine of the Entomology Department of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

55. Evidence from local authorities shows quite clearly that the incidence of bed bugs in slum houses is nowadays far less than was experienced before the war. This is a measure of the higher standards of cleanliness now generally achieved and of the efficacy of modern insecticides of the D.D.T. type. Where routine disinfestation was practised pre-war this has mostly been abandoned in favour of selective disinfestation. The usual practice nowadays is to deal only with those cases where vermin are actually found, and hydrogen cyanide treatment in vans is still the common method, the disinfestation being carried out during the removal and being regarded as part of the removal expenses. In some districts too, all council houses are sprayed with a residual insecticide before occupation or reoccupation.

56. Although bed bugs are the chief pest encountered in slum houses there is today a considerable incidence of woodworm infestation. The dangers of transferring an infestation to the new house are obvious, and its eradication from the timbers of an infested house could cause the local authority much trouble and expense. As a result of the use of infested timber during the war there is probably a greater risk of this pest being present in furniture from slum houses than there was in pre-war days. According to Dr. Busvine, hydrogen cyanide is less toxic to woodworm than to bed bugs and he considers that methyl bromide would be more suitable for woodworm on account of its greater penetrating powers.

57. Local authorities will be well aware of the dangers of using hydrogen cyanide as a fumigant. On the evidence supplied to us we are satisfied that methyl bromide is equally effective as a fumigant against bed bugs and more effective against woodworm. It, too, is toxic to humans but there is less risk in its use as it is more volatile and more easily dispersed after fumigation is complete. If methyl bromide is used in too high a concentration on items containing some types of rubber or protein material, such as horsehair, it can give rise to a disagreeable odour. However, this is a minor disadvantage which should not occur if carried out by skilled operatives.

58. We have sought the advice of the Ministry of Health, and the Forest Products and the Pest Infestation Research Laboratories of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. They all agree that the use of hydrogen cyanide for fumigation of houses or effects should now be abandoned in favour of safer methods. *We therefore recommend that whenever fumigation of houses or furniture is carried out against bed bugs or woodworm, methyl bromide should be used instead of hydrogen cyanide.*

59. We agree that universal fumigation is not necessary nowadays but its abandonment entails some risk, and careful inspection of the house and all effects will be necessary in order to detect the presence of bed bugs or woodworm. Where vermin is found, fumigation of the furniture will be necessary as the most effective way of dealing with both pests. In the past, routine disinfestation had

the advantage that, since it applied to everyone, it did not involve discrimination between tenants. This, however, is not a sufficient reason for disinfection where no vermin has been found. The fact that disinfection may be a precaution against woodworm, which implies no social reproach, may perhaps make the process more acceptable. Where disinfection is carried out in the process of removal, the cost may be covered by any removal allowance paid to a family.

## PAYMENT OF REMOVAL AND OTHER EXPENSES

60. Under the provisions of Sections 18 and 44 of the Housing Act, 1936, local authorities have power to pay to any person displaced under slum clearance procedure, reasonable allowances towards his expenses in removing. It is not merely the cost of removal of furniture which is involved, as in some cases adaptation of electrical apparatus or other incidental expenditure might be necessary. To many of the tenants any additional expenditure at this time would be doubly unwelcome and in some cases might cause real hardship. Most local authorities pay removal expenses, although there appears to be no uniformity of practice. *We recommend that all authorities should make such payments wherever the expense of removal could not be met by the tenant without hardship.*

61. Where large numbers of families are to be moved over an extended period, local authorities might with advantage enter into contracts with removal contractors and then recover part of the cost from the tenants. Birmingham County Borough Council have such an arrangement which has proved of considerable benefit to all the parties concerned. The Corporation has the advantage that removals can be arranged efficiently at short notice and at a lower cost because of the continuity of contract. The tenant, if he pays part of the removal expenses, shares in this lower cost and has a removal contractor made easily available, while the contractor has the advantage of continuity of employment.

62. Where disinfection is being carried out it is usual to combine this with the actual removal, the furniture being transported in special vans and disinfection being carried out en route. Because of the reduced need for disinfection fewer local authorities now possess such vans. However, neighbouring local authorities could come to agreement over the sharing of a van over an area where it could be fully and economically employed.

63. The value of the inducement of paying all or part of a tenant's removal expenses when he transfers to another house at the request of the local authority has been emphasized previously in paragraph 61 of the Report on "Selection of Tenants" and paragraph 32 of the Report on "Transfers, Exchanges and Rents". Circular 1/53 of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government makes it clear that such expenditure may be charged to the housing revenue account under the heading of "Supervision and Management." *We endorse these recommendations as being even more appropriate where the tenant's agreement to move is needed to facilitate the process of slum clearance.*

## SHOPS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

### (a) SHOPS

64. The general question of compensation for property dealt with under slum clearance is outside the scope of this report. We have been impressed, however, in evidence by the number of references to the hardships of the small shopkeeper and the owner of a small business. Although this cannot strictly be regarded as housing management, we feel that we ought to refer to it as a real stumbling

block encountered by local authorities in this activity. We are all familiar with the small shop of the general dealer type in slum clearance areas. Most of them were at one time houses and still have living rooms attached. In common with the rest of the area these buildings are usually unfit and the shops themselves are poor and fail to comply with modern standards of hygiene. They are usually held on short tenancies at controlled rents or they may be in the last stages of long leases. At any rate the rents and the overhead charges are low. The shops are mostly run as family concerns, sometimes by the wife only while the husband works elsewhere. Generally the turnover is comparatively small and the shops are run on a slender profit margin, possibly providing a lower income than could be obtained by working for an employer. Any increase in the overheads would put the owner out of business.

65. Slum areas are over-provided with shops and on new housing estates and in redeveloped areas far fewer shops will be built. One actual case brought to our notice was an area comprising 524 families which had twenty shops, and it was estimated that a replacement estate for these families would have only six shops. The location of shops on a new estate is usually planned nowadays on the pattern of a central group with secondary groups as necessary. One seldom finds an isolated corner shop occupied by a general dealer. The chief reasons for rejecting the corner shop seem to be that the shopkeeper could not rely on enough custom to make it an economic proposition, or that his trade would detract substantially from that of the shopkeepers in the centre provided for the estate. There is some difficulty also in designing a shop as part of a dwelling and in particular for providing for the storing of cartons.

66. Without ignoring these points, on which we have sought information from local authorities with experience of such shops, we think that other aspects of the matter deserve to be considered. People moving to the new estates, especially those who come from a densely populated area, have been accustomed to the convenience of having shops close at hand; it is in fact the one amenity of town life which is most missed by newcomers to housing estates. *We believe that the provision of a number of single small shops to be run as general stores within easy reach of most of the houses would do as much as anything else to help new tenants to feel at home.* The corner shop meets a definite social need. It makes shopping a possibility for old people who are unable to walk far; they cannot all live next to a shopping centre, yet for them the ability to do their own shopping is of great importance. Again, it allows busy mothers to send children on little shopping errands without the traffic hazards which they would meet in going to the main shopping centre. Above all, the corner shop is a focus of interest in a street and is valuable socially as a means of establishing and maintaining contact between families.

67: It has been found that where small general stores of this kind have not been provided there is a tendency for tenants to trade from their own houses. This practice is all the more difficult to check because it clearly meets a need that the people recognise. A further point which should not be overlooked is that the appearance of a shop like this in a road otherwise consisting entirely of small houses gives a certain variety and liveliness to the scene, and adds to the attractiveness and the convenience of the neighbourhood.

68. Our enquiries show that the authorities who have introduced an occasional corner shop on their estates have found that the tenants do make a good living from them and pay an economic rent. We have been given figures that show that a combined shop and house has been erected for £2,000 and let at a weekly rent, including rates, of 52s. 8d. We feel sure that in suitable circumstances these figures could be matched by other authorities. We have therefore had plans prepared, which we give in Appendix II, showing a small shop forming part of a

house, and a shop as a separate building attached to a house. It is estimated that in the first case the shop and house could be built for £2,180, and in the second case for £2,270. At a rate of interest of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent this would mean that the combined house and shop could be let at an unsubsidised rent, exclusive of rates, of about £3 a week.

69. Such shops can be satisfactorily designed as part of a corner site on a housing estate; in this position they may form a useful screen for back gardens and avoid other difficulties in the layout of corners. They might equally well form part of a block of flats, which is common practice on the continent. Shops of this kind not only have the social and other advantages we have mentioned, but they provide a means of livelihood for some at least of the small shopkeepers displaced by slum clearance. They might serve a similar useful purpose in the case of disabled persons. *We recommend local authorities to consider very carefully the more extensive provision of shops of this kind.*

70. For shops with an interest of a tenant for more than a year the basis of compensation is now fixed by statute (Slum Clearance (Compensation) Act, 1956). Shops with a shorter interest, e.g., the weekly tenancy which is so common in slum areas, are outside the provisions of this Act and are still compensated by ex-gratia payments under Sections 18 and 44 of the Housing Act, 1936. It is difficult to fix an equitable basis for these payments and local authority practice varies. There is an infinite variety of circumstances and we make no recommendations about the amount of payment, *but we think that full use should be made of the statutory powers to pay.*

#### (b) SMALL BUSINESSES

71. It often happens that small industries have grown up in slum areas, frequently in ramshackle premises with low rentals. They may be one-man businesses or larger ones employing several people. It is necessary for redevelopment to acquire and demolish property of this kind and it often causes hardship. If local authorities are able to help in transplanting such industries, it reduces the opposition to slum clearance proposals. Owners of premises other than houses are entitled to compensation at compulsory purchase value, but they are usually more interested in transferring their business than in cash compensation. It is no easy matter to provide alternative accommodation but some London boroughs have built stables for letting to displaced barrow boys. Birmingham County Borough Council also have provided specially in their redevelopment areas for small workshops which have been displaced. *We commend these examples heartily and stress once more the importance of trying to provide alternative premises rather than merely being content with meeting legal obligations on a cash basis.*

## DEFERRED DEMOLITION OF PROPERTY

72. Some local authorities have so high a proportion of unfit houses that their early clearance is a physical impossibility. A certain number of these houses must therefore be retained for temporary use, and we have mentioned the value of this kind of accommodation in rehousing certain types of family from unfit houses. Many of the houses are in such a bad state of repair that if they were owned by private landlords they would be the subject of a Public Health Act notice. It is therefore essential to establish close contact with public health inspectors, and that the necessary repairs are carried out as soon as possible. The amount to be spent on repair and improvement of these houses will usually be related to the forecast of their life. All this points to the need for a carefully

planned repair programme linked up with the actual demolition. It is just another example of the general truth that housing management, although primarily a function of the housing department, cannot be effectively discharged without close contact between all the local authority departments concerned.

## HOUSING MANAGEMENT STAFF

73. We have already expressed our view that the successful housing of families affected by slum clearance depends very largely on the work of the housing department. We think local authorities would do well to review arrangements for visiting and interviewing families who are to be moved. They will want to be sure that the people who are doing this work are best suited to it and also that the organization of their work gives them enough time for making regular and friendly contacts with the families concerned. If it is possible to maintain continuity so that the same person is in touch with a family both before and after the move there is much to be gained. The time and patience spent in getting down to the many personal problems involved in rehousing is abundantly worth while if it builds up confidence in the council's goodwill.

74. Some authorities will find that the extra work on slum clearance means that additional staff have to be employed in the housing department. In engaging extra staff, care should be taken to select people with those humane qualities which will bring them into the happiest personal relations with the families. It may sometimes be possible by rearranging duties to make sure that the members of the existing staff who are best suited to the work are so employed. It is hardly necessary to add that suitable qualifications and training are nowhere more valuable than in work of this kind.

75. It is now many years since work on slum clearance was brought to a stop. There may well be local authorities whose housing management staff have never before had experience of slum clearance and the younger members of the staff, at any rate, will have little practical knowledge of the work. The Institute of Housing in their evidence suggested that "it would be an advantage if local authorities whose clearance programmes are well under way, and who have gathered recent experiences of post-war operations were to offer facilities for officers from other authorities to be seconded to them for a short period of training and instruction". We think that an arrangement of this kind between two local authorities would be valuable, but perhaps a better means of providing instruction for members of housing departments engaged in this work would be by organizing short training courses in accessible centres throughout the country to which local authorities would send selected members of their housing departments. The difficulty of sparing people from their work would probably mean that this course would have to be limited to a week, but a good deal of ground could be covered by way of lectures and demonstrations even in this short time. Courses run in the big urban areas, where most of the clearance will have to be done, could be attended by people living in the surrounding areas so that the cost to be met by the local authorities would be the fares of their staff and a contribution towards the expenses of the course. If the cordial support of the local university or technical college could be enlisted, these expenses need not be very high. *We think that such a course would not only provide very useful technical information but would help those attending to approach slum clearance with a better understanding of the human as well as the physical problems involved.*

76. We hope that local authorities will consult the local education authorities for their area to see where it is practicable to run a series of short courses on slum clearance for members of housing management departments. In Appendix III we give a suggested outline for a course.

## HOUSING COMMITTEES

77. Finally, we realise that, as well as the staffs of housing departments, elected members of housing committees have an important part to play in the operation of a slum clearance programme. Much will depend on the understanding shown by councillors of the problems we have discussed, and their sympathetic approach to the search for a solution. In their contacts with the public, and particularly with the families to be rehoused, they can do much to explain the council's purpose in slum clearance, and to secure public acceptance of its principles. By their support of their officers in what is often a complex and difficult operation they can contribute towards that good team work which is essential for its success.

## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The resumption of slum clearance is to be welcomed. The distinction between rehousing for slum clearance and the provision of houses for families on the waiting list lies in the element of compulsion involved. Special consideration of the difficulties which may be encountered by families being moved is justified (paragraphs 7-9).

2. Most families are able to make the transition to new houses without undue difficulty, but some problems will be encountered by all, and some groups, such as old people and families with standards below the average, will be particularly affected (paragraphs 10 to 13).

3. An important part in the process of slum clearance is the study of the needs of individual families and the attempt to meet them (paragraph 14).

4. Families will be anxious about their future and every effort should be made to give full information as early as possible. The housing manager should be brought into consultation by the council at an early stage (paragraphs 15 and 16).

5. The anxiety of families is best allayed by personal visits, at which the number of persons living in the house can also be established. Families should be warned that persons entering the area later may not be rehoused. A lodger having lived for a long time with a particular family and being regarded as a member of it should be enabled to move with it (paragraphs 17 to 19).

6. Contact should be established with families before the move so that the council's intentions may be explained and the family's needs discovered. This contact should be made by experienced and well-qualified officers (paragraphs 20 and 21).

7. The needs of families will vary, and accommodation other than new housing will have to be sought for some, either in other property owned by the council, or by exchanges, or by the acquisition of older houses (paragraphs 22 to 24).

8. Many factors must be taken into account when allocating a dwelling. In particular it may be desirable to rehouse people, and especially old people, near relatives and friends (paragraphs 25 and 26).

9. Some alarm at the prospect of a move may be allayed by a visit to the new estate, particularly if a house or flat is on view. The disadvantages of flats for families with young children should be recognised and greater efforts be made to provide for such families (paragraph 27).

10. Playgrounds should form part of all new housing programmes. Steps should be taken to enable tenants to continue hobbies and to retain their pets as far as possible (paragraphs 28 and 29).

11. The loss of familiar amenities is a reason for reluctance to move. It is important to provide shops in advance. The early provision of a telephone kiosk is desirable. The continuity of the health services should be preserved and it may be necessary to provide a welfare clinic. Full information about the availability of services should be given (paragraphs 30 to 33).

12. Most families will have to adjust their budget to meet a higher rent and some may need advice on this subject. Families with low incomes will either need to have the rent of a new dwelling reduced, or lower rented accommodation must be found for them (paragraphs 34 to 36).

13. Many families will acquire new furniture on a hire purchase basis. The introduction of regulations requiring the signature of both husband and wife on hire purchase agreements might be a check on too hasty expenditure (paragraph 37).

14. The provision of essential furniture and bedding by local authorities under the Housing Acts will help families with low incomes. The collection and distribution of second-hand furniture, in co-operation with voluntary organizations, would also help the poorer families (paragraphs 38 and 39).

15. Many detailed questions relating to the move to a new dwelling will be asked by the families concerned. Housing staff should be fully informed on these points, and arrangements made where necessary for office interviews with specially assigned officers. In large clearance areas an information office on the site has advantages. It might be linked with an advisory service on budgeting, furnishing and other matters related to the move (paragraphs 40 to 42).

16. Education authorities might provide additional classes in subjects connected with the new home. Demonstrations of furnished houses or flats are a useful means of giving guidance on furnishing and decorations (paragraphs 43 to 45).

17. A move to a new house is more difficult for old people than for other families. It is an advantage if they can be housed near relatives or friends. The conversion of older houses may make it possible to rehouse some old people near their present homes (paragraphs 46 and 47).

18. Old people may need help in the actual removal, and the services of voluntary organizations can supplement those of the housing department (paragraphs 48 to 50).

19. It may be desirable to offer families, whose standards are much below the average, older houses. They may need additional help from voluntary organizations or social workers with special experience of problem families (paragraphs 51 to 53).

20. The use of modern insecticides has reduced bug infestation. Disinfestation of the furniture of families to be moved should be carried out only where vermin, including woodworm, is actually found. Methyl bromide is preferable to hydrogen cyanide as a fumigant. Careful inspection of house and furniture should be made (paragraphs 54 to 59).

21. Local authorities have power to pay expenses in removing, but their practice varies. Contracts between local authorities and removal contractors have been found to be advantageous. The payment of removal expenses, particularly where transfers and exchanges are arranged in connection with slum clearance, is recommended (paragraphs 60 to 63).

22. Many small shopkeepers are likely to be displaced in the course of slum clearance and relatively few shops of a similar kind are usually provided on housing estates. Single small shops run as general stores are a great convenience to tenants, and meet a social need. They have been successfully provided by some authorities and the practice is recommended. Plans are appended (paragraphs 64 to 68).

23. Full use should be made of statutory powers to pay compensation to displaced shopkeepers. Efforts should be made to provide premises in which small businesses can be enabled to carry on (paragraphs 70 and 71).

24. Where the demolition of some houses is deferred, care should be taken in maintaining a sufficient standard of repairs (paragraph 72).

25. Successful rehousing depends on the work of the housing department. The staff should be selected and their work arranged so as to ensure the best results from their relations with families to be moved. Additional training may be needed by officers engaged in this work and short training courses are recommended (paragraphs 73 to 76).

26. The interest of members of housing committees in the work of slum clearance and their support of their officers is essential for its success (paragraph 77).

We wish to record our thanks to Mr. I. Davey and Miss M. Empson, our Joint Secretaries, and to express our appreciation of their work. They made all the arrangements for us to receive evidence from organizations and individuals and exercised great initiative in a difficult selection of materials for discussion. Their exceptional knowledge of the human problems involved in our study was of great assistance to us.

*(Signed)*

J. M. Mackintosh  
A. F. Bradbeer  
J. F. Galloway  
P. L. Leigh-Breese  
D. E. Miskin  
Stella Reading  
C. A. Stansbury

I. Davey,  
M. Empson,  
Joint Secretaries.



# APPENDIX I

## List of Local Authorities, Organizations and Individuals from whom evidence has been received

### LOCAL AUTHORITIES

London County Council	Aldridge Urban District
Brighton County Borough	Dronfield Urban District
Sunderland County Borough	Seaham Urban District
Dartmouth Borough	Chard Rural District
Bilston Borough	Chesterfield Rural District
Newark Borough	Pontardawe Rural District
Stepney Metropolitan Borough	Wellington Rural District
Wrexham Rural District	

### ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

- Association of Municipal Corporations
- Dr. J. L. Burn, M.D., *M.O.H., Salford*
- Mr. W. R. Clee
- \*Mrs. L. Cooke, *Welfare Officer, L.C.C.*
- \*Major Lily Daw, *Salvation Army*
- Family Service Units
- Housing Centre Trust
- Institute of Housing
- Institution of Municipal Engineers
- Miss H. Jennings, *Bristol University Settlement*
- \*Mrs. M. Jefferys, *London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*
- Mr. J. A. Kenyon, *Borough Engineer, Middlesbrough*
- London Council of Social Service
- \*Miss M. J. Mayell, *Housing Manager, Finsbury M.B.C.*
- Metropolitan Boroughs Standing Joint Committee
- National Council of Social Service
- The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
- Rural District Councils Association
- Sanitary Inspectors Association
- Society of Housing Managers
- Dr. J. Spencer, *Bristol University*
- \*Miss M. J. Tabor, M.B.E., *Housing Manager, Development Corporation, Stevenage*
- Urban District Councils Association
- \*Dr. R. C. Wofinden, M.D., *M.O.H., Bristol*
- Women's Voluntary Service

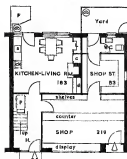
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\* The Sub-Committee received oral evidence from those marked \*  
The evidence given by individuals named above was given in their personal capacity.

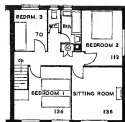
# APPENDIX II

## Plans for single Shops

Store in garden 50 sq. ft.



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

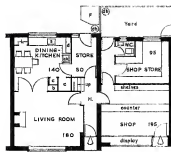
SCHEME 1

GROSS AREA . . . 1219 sq. ft. (excl. Store in garden 50 sq. ft.)

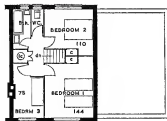
SHOP AREA . . . 219 \* \*

SHOP STORE AREA . . . 83 \* \*

LIVING AREA . . . 321 \* \*



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

SCHEME 2

GROSS AREA . . . 1223 sq. ft.

SHOP AREA . . . 195 \* \*

SHOP STORE AREA . . . 55 \* \*

LIVING AREA . . . 320 \* \*



# APPENDIX III

## Outline of Training Course

### *Monday*

- |      |                                                                                                                             |                            |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a.m. | (1) Introductory talk on the purpose of slum clearance.                                                                     | Medical Officer of Health. |
|      | (2) General problems of management involved in moving families. Need for contact with families well in advance of the move. | Housing Manager.           |
| p.m. | (1) Slum clearance; procedure for survey and acquisition.                                                                   | Housing Surveyor.          |

### *Tuesday*

- |      |                                                                                                               |                     |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| a.m. | (1) Visiting families to be moved; the information to be obtained. Preparation of schedule and other records. | Housing Department. |
|      | (2) Visit to a housing department to see records kept, &c.                                                    | Housing Department. |
| p.m. | (1) Interviewing; arrangements and methods. The technique of the interview.                                   | Housing Visitor.    |
|      | (2) Special cases—e.g., owner-occupiers, shopkeepers, workshop owners.                                        | Housing Visitor.    |

### *Wednesday*

- |      |                                                                             |                         |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| a.m. | (1) Allocation of accommodation. Methods of selection in difficult cases.   | Housing Manager.        |
|      | (2) Visit to a housing department to see machinery for arranging exchanges. |                         |
| p.m. | (1) Conversions and use of old property.                                    | Architect's Department. |
|      | (2) Visits to such houses.                                                  | Architect's Department. |

### *Thursday*

- |      |                                                               |                                                      |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| a.m. | (1) Voluntary organizations and their help in slum clearance. | Council of Social Service, Family Service Units, &c. |
|      | (2) Special problems of old people.                           | A member of the Women's Voluntary Service.           |
| p.m. | (1) Disinfestation.                                           | Public Health Inspector.                             |
|      | (2) Demonstration of disinfestation methods.                  | Public Health Inspector.                             |

### *Friday*

- |      |                                                                                                                       |                                                        |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| a.m. | (1) Provision of information to families before and after moving, in setting up information office, maps of area, &c. | Housing Manager.                                       |
|      | (2) Visit to the local Citizens' Advice Bureau.                                                                       |                                                        |
| p.m. | (1) Summing up and discussion of questions raised by those taking part.                                               | Housing Manager, Medical Officer of Health, Architect. |

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